

# CODE FOR THE ROAD

FOLLOW THE RULES. FOLLOW THE LAW.



## For Immediate Release

September 6, 2016

For more information: Contact your local law enforcement in Bismarck, Burleigh County, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, Jamestown, Minot, the University of North Dakota, Valley City or Watford City.

### *Patrols out for Texting Drivers in September*

*Bismarck* – In September, eleven law enforcement agencies serving nine of North Dakota's most populated areas are deploying special traffic patrols to enforce the ban on texting while driving.

The North Dakota law applies to any driver in a traffic lane, even if the vehicle is stopped. The fine for texting while driving is \$100.

Patrol officers may pull over any driver exhibiting behaviors or postures consistent with using a mobile device to compose, send, or read data. The enforcement teams typically use multiple vehicles and trained observers to look for texting drivers. Teams may also employ strategic vantage points to view multiple traffic lanes.



“This month’s enforcement focus on texting while driving is for the safety of the traveling public,” said Karin Mongeon, director of the North Dakota Department of Transportation’s Safety Division. “The increased enforcement allows law enforcement to stress the importance of driving distraction-free before motorists hurt themselves or somebody else.”

Most people feel texting or emailing by other drivers is a very serious threat to their personal safety (as reported in the [AAA 2015 Traffic Safety Culture Index](#)).

“But people are still doing it. [Only about a third of drivers in North Dakota say they never text while driving](#),” said Mongeon. “And only two percent of in-state drivers surveyed this year think other drivers never text.”

How dangerous is distracted driving? Two studies [reported by the AAA Foundation](#) found that any cell phone use by a driver multiplies the chance of a crash by a factor of four. For drivers who text, [a crash is 23 times more likely](#) than for an attentive driver.

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Agencies participating in *U Drive. U Text. U Pay.* enforcement in September include police departments in Bismarck, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, Jamestown, Minot, Valley City and Watford City. The Burleigh County Sheriff's Department and the University of North Dakota have also scheduled extra enforcement to cite texting drivers.

The NDDOT administers federal grant funding for extra enforcement of distracted driving laws as part of an overall effort to prevent deaths and injuries on North Dakota roads.

Learn more about traffic safety initiatives at [dot.nd.gov](http://dot.nd.gov), [ndcodefortheroad.org](http://ndcodefortheroad.org) or join the conversation on the *Code for the Road* Facebook or Twitter page. Families are invited to create memorials for those who have died in crashes in North Dakota at [ndcodefortheroad.org/memorial](http://ndcodefortheroad.org/memorial).

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